



Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Serving as Director of the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention for the past five years has been a highlight of my professional life. The wonderful advocates from around the state that give so generously of their time, hearts and homes, to prevent or care for children who are at risk of being abused are angels in my eyes. Governor Bentley stated in a January 1, 2012 news article, "We need to make sure every child is able to reach his or her full potential", and that desire is shared by every advocate for every child in Alabama.

I had the honor of serving on the Board of the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parents Association, working on early childhood education, traveling the state conducting focus groups with stakeholders and consumers, and meeting with foster and adoptive children to address service delivery issues. What a five year plan!

We have enjoyed much success in seeing the reduction of child deaths in the (0-3) age group; reduction in numbers of indicated child abuse and neglect cases and changing Systems with the Alabama Child Defend project. Not all has been rosy; we have experienced a reduction in funding, elimination of programs, reduction in staff, but we have persevered. We have worked with legislators who are champions and some that were not; we have initiated, negotiated, and advocated for policy change, some we won, some we did not. All of the above is reason to have faith, continue the fight for Alabama's children and believe we can and will defeat obstacles to make the well-being of children a priority for Alabama.

Children First Foundation has been a great partner and worked diligently to support services and policy issues for children and families; the Alabama Realtors have been unwavering supporters of our programs in the community; public/private partnerships are vital to saving our children and we have a strong foothold on those partnerships.

I want to thank the community partners that make me so proud, the staff of the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, the Board of Directors and all of the volunteer advocates that make the system work. Last but not least; Eureka... Powell Brewton of the State DHR Quality Assurance Committee was welcomed into the 21st Century electronically and I was there to witness the admission!

God speed...

Testimony of Services from a Client

To whom it may concern,

I would like to take a moment and share with you a little personal background before I explain the reason for this letter. At the age of 32, I found myself divorced, unemployed, the mother of two beautiful little boys (ages 5 and 7), and highly addicted to prescription pain killers. The depth of my addiction made it impossible for me to function as a mother, gain employment, or even to complete daily chores. My children would be consistently tardy for school if they even made it at all. I increased my drug usage and found myself lost in a new addiction to crack cocaine. At this point, realizing I could no longer care for my children I took them to their father giving no explanation, went home, packed a bag and began my life on the streets. I survived by prostituting, stealing, and selling crack for my dealers. This lifestyle went on for several years, with several arrests until the charges became serious enough that I was sentenced to prison.

Now.....the reason for this letter. While I was in Colbert County Jail waiting to go to prison, a group of ladies from a place called Community Action of Northwest Alabama came into the jail and began a parenting class. This was in April-May of 2007. I was one of the first groups to be offered this class. The ladies were not only compassionate; they were very knowledgeable about the subject of parenting and life skills in general. Unfortunately, I was sent to prison on July 5th, 2007 before I was able to complete the class. I kept in touch with one of the ladies during my time in prison and she helped me to get into a local half-way house once I had completed parole in January of 2009. When I was released I had no future, I had 3 felony convictions, and bad teeth as a result of years of drug abuse, and extremely low self-esteem....you could say I was a broken woman. I could have turned back to drugs, but with the help of Community Action (specifically Sheila Weaver and Holly Morrison) I made the decision to rejoin and complete the parenting class. Little did I know this would take my life in a direction I never thought possible. These ladies helped to rebuild my relationship with my sons, who were 12 and 14 by this time; they made me a better parent than I was even before the drugs took over. They helped to get my teeth fixed which was such a blessing, but ever greater than that they helped get my enrolled in college! I also became the Assistant Director at the half-way I had originally been a client at. Because of the impact Community Action (Mother's Program) had on my life, we made it a mandatory class for all of our clients. I witnessed all the good that this program does for ladies who are not only struggling with addiction, but also with parenting their children.

Four years later, I have a wonderful relationship with my boys, I just celebrated my 6th year of sobriety, I'm a senior at the University of North Alabama, due to graduate in the spring of 2014 with a bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies, and I am happily married to a wonderful man that accepts my past and looks forward to our future. None of this would have been possible if not for the ladies who teach the Mother's program and give great representation of such as wonderful organization (Community Action of Northwest Alabama). I will be eternally grateful for these ladies and will live my life with the goal of passing on what they so freely gave to me. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

The Department welcomes new staff!



Desiree Bice is a Montgomery native who has been employed with the State for approximately 14 years. She is currently working as a Program Assistant with the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention. She reviews site reports, maintains and updates grantee files, and assists in preparing grantee trainings and child abuse prevention activities. Previous to this position, Ms. Bice was employed with the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles in the Victim Location Unit. She utilized computer programs and law enforcement agencies to find victims, or next of kin to victims, and notify them of upcoming parole hearings pertaining to their case. She has also lived in south Florida, where she was employed in government human resources; and Seattle, where she worked for a cruise line and a timeshare company.

Her hobbies include travelling, reading, listening to music, and volunteer work. She has travelled to Belgium, England, Germany, Switzerland, France, Western Canada and the Caribbean. Her most recent trip was to New York City where she and her nephew visited the 9/11 Memorial. This was one of the most moving experiences she has encountered in her travels. Her favorite destination, however, is London which she has visited four times. Ms. Bice also loves animals, especially her two kitties Annie and Mavis, and has done volunteer work for the Montgomery Humane Society.

Harrison B. Black is a Field Director and Prevent Child Abuse Alabama Program Manager at the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention. He monitors and provides technical assistance to 40 grantees in south, west, and northwest Alabama. In 2012, Black was appointed by Gov. Robert Bentley as the Data and Compliance Manager at ServeAlabama, the Governor's Office of Faith Based and Volunteer Service. He monitored a \$12.9 million FEMA grant for the Alabama Disaster Case Management Program. The program provided case management services to survivors of the 2011 Alabama tornadoes. It recently received a no-cost extension to continue to serve Alabamians through October of this year.

His career experience spans the spectrum of non-profit management. As the chief executive of the Baldwin Housing Alliance (BHA) he developed an education program that provided housing counseling and education to Baldwin County citizens. BHA worked with the Baldwin County Commission and several cities to improve housing for asset challenged individuals. A new area agency, BHA assisted an individual with loan documents and the purchase of his first home within months of operation. BHA also revitalized six homes for another nonprofit.



St. Andrew's Place provided residential, medical, and other related services for adults with intellectual disabilities in five locations. As Executive Director he was responsible for all administrative, clinical, and facilities management decisions. Black has been a program director and senior therapist at West Alabama Mental Health Center (WAMHC). He coordinated all clinical and wrap-around services. Upon leaving WAMHC he returned to provide crisis counseling for hurricane evacuees on a FEMA grant, Project Rebound, which was similar to the Alabama Disaster Case Management Program.

Black continues to support many nonprofits including The Community Kitchens of Birmingham, 55th Place Thrift Store, Wilmer Hall, and Birmingham AIDS Outreach. His hobbies include International travel, hiking, Creole cooking, emerging technology, and photography. Black's travels have taken him to London, Paris, Belfast, Amsterdam, Cologne, and other European cities. He has also traveled to Beijing where the highlight was walking on the Great Wall and eating at traditional Chinese restaurants outside of tourist areas. Because of his love of photography he has photographed the Eiffel Tower, *Arc de Triomphe*, the Grand Canyon, Stonehenge, the Summer Palace, and other natural, historical, and industrial sites.

On Thursday, May 2nd, the State Legislature gave final passage to a bill aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect. The bill expands the list of professionals who are mandatory reporters of abuse and neglect and gives them protections.

Currently, only certain professionals – doctors, social workers, nurses, day care workers, teachers, police and others – are required to report suspected child abuse. Under this new law, physical therapists, all public and private K-12 employees, and employees of public and private institutions of postsecondary and higher education will be added to the list of mandatory reporters.

The bill passed through both the House and the Senate under the bipartisan leadership of two child advocates, Representative Dickie Drake, R-Leeds and Senator Vivian Figures, D-Mobile. Under this bill public or private employers are prohibited from punishing a worker for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.



Car Seat Safety

The newest guidelines from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration encourage parents to keep all children in rear facing car seats until they are 2 years old or until they reach the highest weight and height parameters set by the seat's manufacturer. These new guidelines are to maximize children's safety. Research shows that rear facing car seats are the safest choice because they cradle and protect the neck and spinal cord in the event of a collision.



Review the new guidelines at the NHTSA's web site www.nhtsa.gov/safety/cps

2013 CTF Day at the State House



Realtors Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort, June 2013
 (Alabama Realtors support "Kids" through the sale of the Realtors car tags)



Program Year 2013-2014 Field Director/Program Assistant Assignments

District	Field Director	Program Assistant
1	Harrison Black	Dawn Miller
2	Mike Roberts	Cassandra Sharp
3	Mike Roberts	Cassandra Sharp
4	Mike Roberts	Cassandra Sharp
5	Harrison Black	Dawn Miller
6	Jessica Jackson	Desiree Bice
7	Harrison Black	Dawn Miller
Responsible Fatherhood	Jessica Jackson	Desiree Bice

Child Abuse Prevention Activities Around the State



MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Child Abuse and Prevention secures resources to fund evidence-based community programs committed to the prevention of child maltreatment; we advocate for children and the strengthening of families.

Department of Child Abuse Prevention Board of Directors

District One

Clinton Johnson

District Two

Anita Archie

District Three

Dr. Margaret Mitchell Brown

District Four

Stacie Jenkins

District Five

Senator Arthur Orr

District Six

Secretary of State Beth Chapman

District Seven

Representative John Merrill, Chair

Member-At-Large

Sally Edwards

Member-At-Large

Mary Ashcraft

Department of Education

Dr. Tommy Bice

Designee—Sallye Longshore

Department of Mental Health

Commissioner Jim Reddoch, JD

Designee—Steve Lafreniere

Department of Human Resources

Commissioner Nancy Buckner

Designee—James Slaughter

Department of Public Health

Dr. Don Williamson, State Health Officer

Designee—Jamey Durham

Department of Public Safety

Colonel Hugh McCall

Designee—Captain Ron Short

We're on the Web
www.ctf.alabama.gov



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